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Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention

Second, third and fourth periodic reports of States parties due in 2014

Democratic People's Republic of Korea*

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Foreword

1. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) hereby submits its Combined Second to Fourth Periodic Report on the Implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (the Convention) in accordance with its obligations under Article 18 of the Convention. The present Report is prepared following the guidelines adopted by the Committee regarding periodic reports to be submitted by States Parties to the Convention.

2. The present Report, covering the period of 2002-2015, describes the legislative, administrative and other measures adopted by the DPRK for the advancement of women and protection and promotion of their rights in all fields of social life, and the progress achieved.

3. The reporting period was a period in which women in the DPRK, under the wise leadership of the great Comrade **Kim Jong Il** and the supreme leader Comrade **Kim Jong Un** and as full-fledged masters of the society, fully exercised equal rights with men in all fields of politics, the economy, social and cultural life, performing great feats in the efforts for the prosperity of the country. The remarkable achievements in the advancement of women and protection and promotion of their rights in the face of the political pressure, economic blockades and military threats of the hostile forces are the fruition born of the DPRK policy of attaching importance to and respecting women, and the patriotic enthusiasm and creative power displayed by women in the building of a thriving nation.

4. The present Report contains the foreword and the status of article-by-article implementation of the Convention, with each part containing detailed facts and figures.

5. A report drafting group was organized by the National Committee for the Implementation of the International Human Rights Instruments (see para. 20 of the present Report), comprising representatives of the legislative, administrative, judicial, prosecutorial institutions, as well as academic institutions, associations and social organizations.

6. The drafting group distributed the Convention, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Concluding Comments adopted by the Committee at its consideration of the initial report of the DPRK (the Concluding Comments) to the Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly (the SPA), the Cabinet, Supreme Court, Supreme Public Prosecutors Office, Education Commission, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Labour, Ministry of Culture, people's committees at all levels, **Kim Il Sung** Socialist Youth League, Korea Democratic Women's Union, Korean Federation for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities, Korean Association for the Human Rights Studies and Population Institute for collection of data and solicitation of inputs to be reflected in the present Report. Several rounds of sector-specific and experts' consultative meetings were held, with special attention being directed to listening to women from different walks of life, with a view to including their views in the present Report. The facts and figures quoted in the present Report demonstrate that significant progress has been achieved in the advancement of women and protection and promotion of their rights during the reporting period.

7. The DPRK decided to withdraw its reservations on the article 2, para. (f) and article 9, para. 2 and made notification thereof to the United Nations in November, 2015.

8. For updated general information on the DPRK, see the Common Core Document 2015 submitted to the United Nations human rights treaty body.

Article 1
Definition of discrimination against women

9. As was stated in the initial Report, the DPRK has a 70-year tradition of gender equality achievement. Since the promulgation on July 30, 1946, the following year after its liberation from the Japanese colonial rule in August 1945, of the Decree on Gender Equality, equality of women with men has been guaranteed both by law and in practice.

10. The Socialist Constitution provides that citizens shall enjoy equal rights in all spheres of State and public activities (art. 65), all citizens who have reached the age of 17 shall have the right to vote and to be elected irrespective of sex, race, occupation, length of residence, property status, education, party affiliation, political views and religion (art. 66) and women shall be accorded equal social status and rights with men (art. 77). The Family Law provides that the husband and the wife shall have equal rights within the family (art. 18).

11. The DPRK further clarified its commitment to fully ensuring gender equality and non-tolerance of discrimination against women in whatever form by adopting on December 22, 2010 the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women, which stipulates in article 2 that the DPRK maintains the consistent policy of ensuring full equality of women with men and that the State shall prohibit all forms of discrimination against women. "All forms of discrimination" in this article means the discrimination in all fields as covered by the Convention, that is, the discrimination on the basis of marital status, as well as direct and indirect discrimination. Stipulations in this Law such as the ensuring of equal rights of women with men in the public and political life, education, health care, employment, property, marriage and family, non-discrimination by reason of being woman, marriage and pregnancy and special protection of the rights and interests of elderly women, women with disabilities and girls are basically in line with the extent of the definition provided in the Convention.

12. With regard to para. 20 of the Concluding Comments, the adoption of the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women created conditions for conducting awareness-raising campaigns on the Convention in a more effective manner. The contents and requirements of the Convention were disseminated in the context of the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women on many occasions, in particular, on the occasion of March 8, the International Women's Day, July 30, the anniversary of the promulgation of the Decree on Gender Equality and November 16, Mothers' Day. The Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women was included in the plan for law observance education of every institution, enterprise and organization for wide dissemination and sensitization, with the result that awareness of the important roles played by women in social progress and well-being of families and public concern about the promotion of their rights further enhanced, and protection of women's rights became legal obligations of all the institutions, enterprises, organizations, families and individuals.

13. Workshops, trainings and awareness-raising seminars were regularly organized for legislators and law enforcement officials for the purpose of familiarizing them

with the requirements of the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women and the Convention. As a result, their understanding of the concept of gender equality went beyond the common sense level to reach a good awareness of the definition of discrimination against women and the requirements as set forth in the Convention, which then became criteria of their day-to-day work.

Article 2
Obligations to eliminate discrimination against women

14. The DPRK attaches great importance to the position and role of women in the social progress and well-being of families and has consistently maintained the policy of respecting and valuing women. All the policies, laws and sector-specific action programmes of the DPRK accord women equal rights with men on the principle of zero tolerance of discrimination against them in all their forms and any affront to their dignity.

15. With regard to para. 24 of the Concluding Comments, a comprehensive review of all the domestic laws were conducted, finding that many of them contained provisions that favour women's interests over men and specially protect them but none of them had provisions relating to discrimination against women. Many of the laws of the DPRK provide for the protection of women's rights and guaranteeing of such rights. For instance, the Socialist Constitution stipulates that the State shall afford special protection to mothers and children and provide all conditions for women to play full role in society (art. 77). The Family Law provides that the State shall consistently maintain the policy of affording special protection to mothers and children and to providing conditions for mothers to bring up and educate their children decently (art. 6). The Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women provides that the whole society shall concern the protection of women's rights and ensure that they fully enjoy their rights (art. 3). The Socialist Labour Law and the Law on Labour Protection contain provisions of special protection of working women.

16. With regard to para. 22 of the Concluding Comments, the DPRK adopted the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women for the purpose of fully ensuring them their rights and further enhancing their position and role in all spheres of public activities. This Law comprehensively reflects the principles and matters in respect of protection of women's rights that are already provided for in the Socialist Constitution, the Decree on Gender Equality 1946 and other laws on education, health care, employment and family plus other matters arising in further promoting their rights, as well as the requirements of the Convention.

17. The Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women comprehensively provides for the principles to be adhered to in protecting women's rights, their rights to public and political life, education, culture, health care, employment, security of person and property, marriage and family, national guidance system for the protection and promotion of women's rights and the obligations of the institutions concerned. With the adoption of this Law, the legal basis for the enjoyment by women of their rights set forth in the Law has been further consolidated, protection and promotion of their rights become legal obligations of the institutions, enterprises, organizations, officials and individuals, and the social climate of respecting and prioritizing women has been further fostered.

18. With regard to para. 18 of the Concluding Comments, the international conventions to which the DPRK is a State party have the same status as the national legislation. The requirements of such conventions are incorporated in the national legislation to be implemented. Where any discrepancy arises between the conventions and the national legislation, the one that is more favourable for the realization of women's rights takes precedence.

19. With regard to para. 30 of the Concluding Comments, measures were taken to further enhance and expand the functions and scope of activities of the existing national coordination committee. Up until 2014, the implementation of the Convention was placed under the charge of the National Coordination Committee organized on September 10, 2001, which was comprised of officials of the Presidium of the SPA, the Cabinet, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Education Commission, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Labour, Central Bureau of Statistics and other related ministries, judicial and law enforcement officials from Supreme Court, Supreme Public Prosecutors Office, Ministry of People's Security and officials concerned of the Central Committee of the Korea Democratic Women's Union. The functions of the National Coordination Committee was to coordinate matters arising in the implementation of the Convention, take necessary measures, disseminate the Convention and prepare periodic reports on the implementation of the Convention. For instance, the Committee recommended to the Presidium of the SPA to enact the law on the protection and promotion of women's rights and played an important role in drafting and deliberating the bill. After the adoption of the law in 2010, the coordination committee conducted periodic surveys of compliance by people's committees at all levels, institutions, enterprises and organizations with the law and adopted required actions.

20. In April 2015, the National Committee for Implementing International Human Rights Treaties (the National Committee) was formed, merging the national coordinating committees that existed for the implementation of human rights treaties to which the DPRK is a State arty. The National Committee set it as the main objective of its activities to ensure that the requirements of the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women and the Convention are integrated into the State policy and the implementation thereof. The National Committee carries out periodic surveys of women's status and situation at institutions, enterprises and organizations and makes remedial recommendations to the Presidium of the SPA, the Cabinet, law enforcement organs and other related bodies. It also engages in the dissemination of the Convention and the Concluding Comments and the preparation of periodic reports to be submitted to the treaty bodies.

21. The recommendations of the National Committee are communicated through the State administrative system from the central down to the grass roots level, and the status of the implementation thereof are also aggregated and evaluated within the system. The National Committee obtains once a year from the Presidium of the SPA, the Cabinet and Central Bureau of Statistics the information on the status of implementation of its recommendations, measures taken for the protection and promotion of women's rights and progress made and the relevant statistics.

22. Monitoring of the implementation of the Convention is undertaken by such institutions as supervisory departments of the ministries concerned, inspection departments of people's committees at all levels and institutions of prosecution and people's security. For instance, the inspection departments of the provincial people's

committees conduct inspection and regulatory activities to ensure that institutions, enterprises and organizations under its jurisdiction are duly concerned about people's living and provision of good working and living conditions to their employees, as well as identifying violations of human rights and interests such as practices of power abuse, bureaucracy and corruption.

23. Legal procedures for redressing discrimination against women, namely, complaints and petitions, criminal and civil proceedings and criminal compensations were detailed in the paras. 80-84 of the initial Report. The Law on the Compensation for Damages was adopted in April, 2005 in order to establish strict system and order for the compensation of bodily injury and property damages and protect civil rights and interest of institutions, enterprises and individuals. Sensitization seminars were organized during the reporting period to help women exercise their rights in this regard, and to guide law enforcement officials to respect women's dignity and not commit violations of their rights during performance of their duties.

24. With regard to para. 26 of the Concluding Comments, the Law on Complaints and Petitions and the Implementing Regulations were extensively amended, the complaints machinery more meticulously organized and the complaints departments at different levels and fields were required to perform their functions in a more responsible manner.

25. A robust complaints mechanism is put in place in the DPRK. All State institutions have departments for dealing with complaints and petitions, while enterprises and organizations have an official in charge of handling complaints on a full-time or concurrent basis. All the institutions, enterprises and organizations are under obligation to investigate and settle complaints on the principles of objectivity and fairness. Results of investigation of complaints filed are considered at the consultative meetings of the leading officials or on the Day of Complaints Settlement of the unit concerned for final settlement. Ministries or ministry-level units and provincial level units including the provincial people' s committees hold such meetings once a month, while the municipal and county people's committees and other units on the 1st, 11th and 21st day of every month, which are set as the Day of Complaints Settlement. Such meetings are chaired by the chiefs of the units and all of the complaints filed are considered on a case-by-case basis in the presence of the official in charge and others that are deemed appropriate to attend. Even when there are no complaints to deal with, they make it a rule to meet to discuss and explore ways to improve their work. Institutions, enterprises and organizations regularly review the results of complaints filed and dealt with, and adopt necessary measures: ministries and people's committees at provincial, municipal and county levels meet once a quarter, and complaints departments once a month.

26. The above-mentioned complaints and petitions departments in the DPRK perform similar functions to the ombudsmen in other countries. No one is allowed to intervene in the investigation and consideration of complaints and petitions and the final settlement thereof are guaranteed by the Law on the Complaints and Petitions.

Article 3
Development and advancement of women

27. The DPRK adopted a series of legislative measures to ensure that all citizens, including women, fully enjoy their political, economic, social and cultural rights, as well as to protect their interests.

28. The Socialist Constitution was amended on April 9, 2009, stipulating in article 8 that the State shall respect and protect human rights, which manifested the DPRK's commitment to ensuring human rights at a higher level. With this as an occasion, a lot of efforts have been made for the strengthening of the legal system for the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms, leading to the adoption of a series of laws in that regard.

29. The Law on General Education was adopted on January 19, 2011, the Decree on the Enforcement of the Universal 12-year Compulsory Education promulgated on September, 2012 and the Law on Higher Education adopted on December 14, 2011, legalizing the rights of all children, including girls, to receive 12-year compulsory education free of charge from pre-school through primary, junior, to senior secondary levels, as well as higher education according to their wishes and abilities. The laws and decree also explicitly provide for the obligations of the State, institutions, enterprises, organizations and individuals for the realization of the rights set forth therein.

30. The Law on Labour Protection adopted on July 8, 2010 stipulates the obligations of the institutions, enterprises, organizations and individuals to provide working people with safe and hygienic working conditions and to protect their lives and promote their health. In particular, the law provides that pregnant women shall be given light work before they take maternity leave and nursing women shall be ensured breastfeeding breaks (art. 24), that institutions, enterprises and organizations shall not, in consideration of women's constitutional features, assign them arduous, harmful or dangerous work, put pregnant or lactating women on night shifts nor work them overtime or on holidays, shall not dismiss them unless there is compelling reason to do so (art. 38) and that women shall be given regular and additional holidays as well as maternity leave (art. 40). The adoption of this Law contributed to further perfecting the legal system for the protection of working women.

31. The Social Security Law adopted on January 9, 2008 and amended two times prescribes the principles to be abided by in providing social security to persons that are not able to work due to old age, sickness or disabilities, and helpless old people, procedures of filing application for social security, disbursement of social security allowances, establishment and operation of social security institutions and the obligations of the institutions, enterprises and organizations concerned.

32. The Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Children was adopted on December 22, 2010 for the purpose of further consolidating and improving the child protection system and fully ensuring the rights and interests of children in the fields of social life, education, health care, family and administration of justice. The adoption of this Law further enhanced public awareness of the promotion of children's rights and secured legal basis for them to fully enjoy their rights set forth therein.

33. The Law on the Protection of the Elderly was adopted on April 26, 2007 with a view to ensuring them their rights and interests so that they could live a worthwhile

and happy life in physical and mental health. This Law provides for the definition and social status of the elderly, the State policy on the protection of the elderly, obligation of the State and the family to support them, detailed matters on the creation of necessary conditions and health care, organization of cultural activities and obligations to provide conditions for that purpose, their rights to participate in social activities and obligations to provide conditions to that end.

34. The Law on the Protection of Persons with Disabilities was adopted on June 18, 2003 and then amended in November, 2013 to further incorporate the requirements of the Convention on the Protection of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities that the DPRK signed in July the same year. The Law provides for a new definition of the persons with disabilities in line with the Convention, the State policy on their protection, matters concerning the prevention of disabilities and survey of such persons, their rehabilitation, education, cultural life, employment and the obligations of the institutions, enterprises and organizations in that regard.

35. The Law on Succession was adopted to provide for matters relating to protection of private property, statutory and testamentary succession, donation and execution of succession. This Law applies equally to all male and female citizens, thus enabling women to fully exercise their rights to succession.

36. The Law on Compensation for Damages was adopted on April 19, 2005 to establish system and order for compensation for bodily injuries and property damages, thereby protecting civil rights and interests of institutions, enterprises, organizations and individual citizens.

37. The Law on Socialist Labour and the Law on the Protection and Promotion of Women's Rights were amended on June 30, 2015 to extend the period of maternity leave from 150 days to 240 days. This new measure created better conditions for recovery of maternal health and nutritional care of newborns and further enhanced public concern about maternal and child health care.

38. In the DPRK, it is the people's committees at all levels that provide guidance on the work for the protection and promotion of women's rights. The provincial, municipal and county people's committees are the on-the-ground executors of the State policy and householders in charge of the people's living in the area under their control. The 50-odd departments in the people's committees, namely the education, culture, health care, population administration, finance, labour, food administration, commerce, land and environmental protection, maintenance, disaster prevention and complaints departments are under obligation to protect and promote the rights and interest of citizens in their respective areas. These committees include in their yearly action plans the measures to ensure full enjoyment by people of their rights, in which emphasis is put on the improving of living conditions of women, children, persons with disabilities and elderly.

39. With regard to para. 26 of the Concluding Comments, special attention was directed to familiarizing the officials of people's committees with human rights-related national laws and international conventions, considering the crucial role they play in the protection and promotion of human rights. Awareness-raising seminars and workshops were periodically organized to help them acquire a deep understanding of the requirements and contents of the laws such as the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Children, the Law on the Protection and Promotion of Women's Rights, the Law on Labour Protection, the Law on Social

Security and others. Such efforts resulted in the officials' enhanced awareness of human rights protection, which was manifested in their giving absolute priority to the demands and interests of the people, making devoted efforts for their good and combating the abuse of power, bureaucracy, corruption and all other practices that violate people's interests.

40. The Korea Democratic Women's Union (KDWU) plays an important role in protecting women's rights and interests. A mass organization of women, the KDWU has its branches all over the country.

41. Education of women on the laws for the protection and promotion of women's and children's rights, human rights-related laws and the State policy is an important item of the yearly action plan of the KDWU. It conducts education in such laws, encourages women to creditably fulfil their mission before the society and the family and organizes diverse cultural activities. It also carries out surveys of situation of women in institutions, enterprises and organizations and makes recommendations to the Presidium of the SPA, the Cabinet and institutions concerned, and where appropriate, to the prosecution and people's security institutions.

Article 4
Temporary special measures

42. The DPRK adopted a series of preferential and special measures in the areas of employment and protection of working women to ensure de jure and de facto gender equality in all fields of public activities.

43. Several Cabinet directives were issued during the reporting period to stimulate women to take an active part in public life. Of these, the directive issued in December, 2009 brought about a turning point in significantly raising the proportion of women in the workforce in different sectors. In accordance with this directive, the Ministry of Labour mandated the minimum proportion of women for each category of occupation, with due consideration given to whether they belong to productive sectors like enterprises, factories and farms or non-productive sectors like education, culture, health care and commerce.

44. State institutions were required to ensure the proportion of women officials at or above 20-25 per cent and the proportion of women department (or division) directors at 10 per cent or above. A Table for Proportion of Male and Female Workers by Occupation was formulated to serve as guidelines for assigning right jobs to right women in consideration of their wishes, gender, age and ability. For instance, it was encouraged to assign the jobs of file clerks and telephone operators more to women than to men.

45. Standards of Job Assignment by Economic Sectors were also laid down in consideration of women's physical constitution and characteristics. For instance, it was required that 100 per cent of the telephone operators, telegraphists, electric communications persons, postal matters inspectors and international postal matter handlers in the telecommunications sector, and nurses, practical nurses and dry nurses in the health sector, 90 per cent of hairdressers, laundry handlers and tailors in the welfare service sector, 100 per cent of netmakers and 70 per cent of fresh water fish farmers in the fisheries sector, 70 per cent of pit maintenance persons and 60 per cent of pit electric car operators in the coal-mining sector, and 40 per cent of electric motor operators should be female workers.

46. Female-dominated production units like daily necessaries workshops and workteams, and housewives' cooperatives were set up at factories, enterprises and cooperative organizations, thus giving women sufficient opportunities to take part in public life.

47. Measures were taken to ensure that all institutions, enterprises and cooperative organizations provide sufficient working conditions to women in a responsible manner. Child care and medical treatment facilities like nurseries, kindergartens and children's wards were set up so that working women could be free from worries about their children; women's office rooms and workplaces were well-furbished to ensure that they work in a cultured and hygienic environment; nurseries and kindergartens across the country were renovated on modern lines and paediatric hospitals established in all provinces; welfare facilities providing a variety of services were set up to afford convenience to women's everyday life and relieve them of household chores. All these contributed towards active participation of women in public life.

48. The Ministry of Labour issued directive No.5 in January, 2014 to effect that women with several children should not be dismissed without valid reasons, and maternity leave and nursing mothers' convenience should be handled as a top priority issue.

49. In accordance with the Regulations on Labour Discipline amended by Cabinet decision No.59 in July, 2015 women, physically frail persons and elderly persons were assigned jobs that were fit for them, with special attention paid to not assigning arduous and harmful jobs to women. Women were allowed to apply for temporary resignation in case they so wish for reasons of medical treatment, nursing their family members or child rearing.

50. Further efforts were made to protect and promote women's health and provide them with good working conditions. For instance, pregnant women were given light jobs and working women were given breastfeeding breaks between work hours (see para. 37 of the present Report). Female farmers with children under 4 years of age and during pregnancy were not allowed to be involved in work using pesticide and insecticide.

Article 5
Elimination of stereotypes and violence against women

51. With regard to para. 28 of the Concluding Comments, measures were taken during the reporting period to eliminate traditional and stereotyped beliefs and attitudes towards the responsibilities and roles of men and women that are lingering in the society and families.

52. Several surveys were conducted by women's union with a view to collecting data in respect of the level of awareness by some selected ministries, schools, universities and families of gender equality and the situation on the ground.

53. The surveys revealed that the concepts and practices of male "superiority" lingering in society and families even after the adoption of the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women were ascribable to the lack of understanding by the general public of the State policy and laws as well as incomplete elimination of traditional assumptions and attitudes, necessitating proactive measures to address them.

54. Women were promoted to leading positions and provided with preferential conditions for fulfilling their duties before the Sate and society, while mass media gave wide coverage of their achievements, thus correcting biased views on women's position and role in the society.

55. Education campaigns about the State policy and laws in respect of gender equality and special protection of women and children were carried out in various forms and ways, namely, through the network of education in law observance, seminars, lectures and photo shows.

56. Women's union played a pivotal role in the dissemination and awareness-raising efforts. Every primary organization of the union has a "correspondent", whose mission is to report to the relevant institutions and the publishing house of the magazine Korean Women on women of laudable deeds and good conducts. Their active roles contributed to enhanced awareness by women of their important mission in society and family, particularly in child upbringing, and to the increased recognition by the general public of the important roles of women and changed views and attitudes towards them.

57. The trade union and other working people's organizations were proactive in organizing seminars and conducting publicity activities concerning gender equality issues, thus building the climate of men adopting a new approach to the protection and promotion of women's rights, helping their wives to take an active part in public activities, respecting their rights in the family and sharing the burden of domestic chores and child upbringing.

58. All institutions, enterprises and organizations were required to find out about prejudices and discrimination against women in their respective units using the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women as criteria, to interview women about their views on their situation and to take appropriate measures. For instance, the Education Commission identified and corrected biased attitudes towards women in the areas of gender ratio in university admission, textbook edition and lecturers' favouritism towards male students, while prosecution and people's security institutions identified the negative tendency of assigning only small tasks to women officials and promoted them to more important posts.

59. Much publicity was given to women devoting themselves for the good of the society and collective, building harmonious family and being exemplary in the upbringing and education of children. In particular, feature films, novels and plays criticizing such practices as disregarding women's role and persisting in male chauvinistic attitudes were produced for wide dissemination. As a result, awareness of the position and roles of women in society and family was raised significantly and the atmosphere of respecting women and giving prominence to them has been fostered on a higher degree.

60. It is common practice for senior officials of the Party and State to join women in a variety of festivals held on major holidays like the Mothers' Day, the anniversary of promulgation of the Decree on Gender Equality and International Women's Day to congratulate and inspire them, which contributed to further fostering the culture of respecting and being considerate towards women.

61. With regard to paras. 38 and 40 of the Concluding Comments, administrative and legal sanctions were strengthened on negative and biased acts against women evident both in society and family life.

62. The Women's Union reinforced the mechanism whereby it kept track of the implementation of the State policy and legislation on gender equality in close cooperation with the people's committees and working people's organizations, communicated its findings to the relevant supervisory and regulatory institutions for appropriate remedial measures and summed up the results every month.

63. Family disputes affecting children and family harmony were in most cases resolved, through conciliation of both parties under the influence of the advice and persuasion of relatives and neighbours. However, in serious cases women filed complaints with the women's union or the department concerned of the people's committees for fair settlement.

64. Population administration institutions, upon being notified by neighbours concerned of family disputes arising in the area under their control, used their best efforts to guide them towards amicable settlement. The courts before which a divorce case was brought due to family dispute conducted education of the persons involved at the stages of lawyers' counselling and fact-finding by judges with a view to guiding them to reconciliation. Since 2003, about 30 per cent of divorce-related cases were resolved through reconciliation between the parties.

65. Courts at different levels developed education materials designed to encourage men to fulfil their legal responsibilities and obligations in the family and conducted dissemination and education activities, which made a substantial contribution to building the social climate of further protecting women's interests.

Article 6
Sexual exploitation of women

66. The DPRK, regarding sexual exploitation of women as a serious crime that violates their human rights and dignity, took legislative and practical measures to prevent and punish such practices in all their forms and manifestations.

67. With regard to para 42 of the Concluding Comments, the Criminal Law defines prostitution as a crime and provides that whoever commits prostitution shall, in serious cases, be subject to reform through labour of not more than 5 years (art. 249). The Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women provides that whoever commits prostitution, or arranges for, forces or lures a woman into committing such act shall be subject to punishment in accordance with the Criminal Law (art. 40).

68. The Criminal Law also provides for a penalty of reform through labour of not more than ten years for raping a woman (art. 279), the same penalty of not more than three years for forcing a woman who is his subordinate to have sexual intercourse with him and the same penalty of not more than five years for having sexual intercourse with a minor under fifteen years of age (art. 281).

69. In order to eliminate acts stimulating sexual exploitation of women, the Criminal Law provides that a person who brings in without permission, develops, spreads or illegally possesses pictures, photos, books, videos or electronic medium containing degenerate, pornographic and obscene contents shall be subject to reform through labour of not more than five years (art. 183).

70. Sexual exploitation of women is in no way a social problem in the DPRK. Some immoral persons who arranged for or forced women to commit prostitution,

or committed rape were duly punished in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Criminal Law. In such cases the convicted persons were put on public trials, where, in the presence of a large number of people, they were sentenced to heavy penalties, alerting others not to commit such crimes.

71. Identities of the victims of sexual exploitation-related crimes were kept in strict confidence, who were compensated in accordance with the Law on Compensation for Damages, which provides that a person who did harm to another's health shall be liable to pay him/her the expenses for medical treatment or the amount of money equal to the wages he/she lost while staying away from work.

72. With a view to preventing practices of prostitution, rape and other acts of affront to women's dignity, explanatory notes on the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women and the Criminal Law, as well as programmes for educational purposes, circulars and notifications were formulated to sensitize the general public on the harmful effects of such acts. Health institutions were also involved in preparing IEC materials in that regard and carried out education campaigns.

73. Human trafficking is inconceivable in the DPRK. However, during the reporting period, abduction and trafficking of our citizens were persistently committed under the manipulation of the south Korean authorities hell-bent on tarnishing the image of the DPRK. Some of the victims returned home, exposing to the whole world the anti-DPRK plots and crime against humanity committed by the south Korean authorities. However, there are still a lot of women in south Korea lured thereto by human smugglers, wishing to return home in vain. For instance, as reported by the foreign media in 2015, a woman who was lured to south Korea during her visit to her relatives abroad has been trying for years to return home but the south Korean authorities denied her departure from the country.

74. In the case of returnees from south Korea or neighbouring countries who crossed the border illegally, institutions concerned opted for educational measures instead of legal punishment, while people's committees in the area concerned provided them with necessary conditions for a happy life with their families. In addition, the State took necessary measures to improve the living standard of the residents in the border area, as well as practical measures to foil the attempts of hostile forces to abduct our residents via the borders.

Article 7
Participation in political and public life

75. All women in the DPRK take part in political and public life on an equal footing with men. There are no legal or institutional impediments to the exercising by women of their socio-political rights and their advancement.

76. Women fully exercise their rights to vote and to stand for election in accordance with the Socialist Constitution, the Law on the Election of Deputies to People's Assemblies at All Levels and the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women. The Socialist Constitution gives all citizens who have reached the age of 17 the right to vote and to be elected, irrespective of sex, race, occupation, length of residence, property status, education, party affiliation, political views or religion (art. 66). The Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women provides that women have equal rights with men to vote and to

stand for election, and the State shall encourage women to take an active part in political and public life and raise the proportion of women deputies to people's assemblies at all levels (art. 12).

77. With regard to para. 44 of the Concluding Comments, women are fully guaranteed the right to vote and to be elected for organs of State power at all levels, from the county People's Assembly to the Supreme People's Assembly, on the principle of universal, equal and direct suffrage by secret ballot. In accordance with the Socialist Constitution, election of deputies to the Supreme People's Assembly and the local people's assemblies are held every 5 and 4 years respectively. Such elections were held several times during the reporting period, in which 99.99 per cent of the voters participated. Women accounted for 20.2 per cent and 27 per cent of the deputies elected for the 13th Supreme People's Assembly in 2014 and local people's assemblies in 2015 respectively.

78. Women deputies represent women in the area concerned in the sessions of people's assemblies, where they make, on their behalf, suggestions or provide inputs into the decision-making, and inform them of the decisions, laws or regulations adopted at the sessions. They find out about the status of implementation of the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women and other human rights-related laws at the institutions, enterprises and organizations in the locality concerned and make, if necessary, remedial recommendations to them.

79. Women's participation in government is guaranteed by law and in practice. The Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women stipulates that all women have rights to hold public office, and public institutions shall employ as many women as possible and ensure them good working and living conditions (art. 14). In particular the Cabinet decision adopted in December 2009 required that the prescribed quota of women in ministries and national institutions should be fully ensured. Accordingly, the Education Commission, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Foodstuff and Daily Necessaries, Ministry of Finance and Central Bureau of Statistics in which women officials already made up more than 20 per cent has seen a 5-6 per cent increase, while the Ministry of Coal Industry, Ministry of Metallurgical Industry and Ministry of Atomic Power Industry which had relatively less women have ensured the proportion at around 17 per cent. The proportion of women department or division directors at ministries or ministry-level institutions stays 16.1 per cent on average.

80. Given that the State has long maintained the policy on gender equality, the general public has a good understanding thereof and legislative measures have been put in place through such laws as the Socialist Constitution, the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women, the Family Law and the like, what remains to be done is to ensure that they are translated into action and results. For this reason, the DPRK directed special attention to increasing the proportion of women officials in local people's committees and leaders of institutions, enterprises and organizations. This ensured full reflection of women's wishes and demands in the decisions of the people's committees and giving due consideration to their rights and interests in the implementation of the decisions. During the reporting period the proportion of women officials at people's committees at all levels was 23.3 per cent on average.

81. The proportion of women leaders of institutions, enterprises and organizations remarkably increased. For instance the newly organized units in the sectors of

education and foodstuff and daily necessaries during the reporting period are mostly headed by women. Organizations like the Korea Education Fund, the Korea Association for Supporting the Children and the Fund for Children with Disabilities and Orphans are staffed mainly by women.

82. Admission of women into universities and cadre-training institutions increased and a lot of competent women were appointed to leading posts. In-service trainings and workshops were organized to help women officials keep abreast of latest developments in their respective areas and improve their leadership skills and abilities. All women officials had access to national-level 7-day in-service training every year, while some of them were sent, in consideration of their wishes, ages and abilities, to full-time training institutions to attend 6-month or 2-year course.

83. Publicity and education campaigns were conducted through mass media to encourage women to take an active part in public and political life. Seeing that some women, though possessing sufficient professional qualifications or abilities, were unwilling to go into politics due to lack of self-confidence or experience, while some others confined themselves to doing housework or child rearing under the influence of traditional and stereotyped perceptions, education campaigns were carried out in various ways to guide them to be aware of their rights and exercise them, and to fulfil their duties before the society and the collective. On the other hand women of many achievements and contributions to the society and people were given wide publicity through mass media.

Article 8
Participation in international activities

84. With regard to para. 44 of the Concluding Comments, women in the DPRK enjoy, on equal terms with men and without any discrimination, their rights to work in all public institutions including the Presidium of the SPA, the Cabinet, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of External Economic Affairs. They also represent their State, Government, institution, enterprise or organization in the international arena and participate in the work of international organizations.

85. No gender discrimination exists in the employment of women by institutions involved in foreign affairs, and the selection of delegates to international conferences/meetings, and civil servants for international organizations, with the eligibility decided on the basis of their merits.

86. Women are working in overseas diplomatic missions with diplomatic postings, acting as representatives of State institutions. They are also actively engaged in the work of the International Democratic Women's Federation and other international and regional organizations.

87. A lot of women officials attended a number of international and regional conferences including, for instance, the NAM Ministerial Conference on the Advancement of Women in May, 2005 and East Asia Women's Forum in July, 2006 and the 14th and 15th Conferences of the International Democratic Women's Federation in April 2007 and April 2012.

88. Women make up 4.9 per cent of holders of overseas diplomatic postings, and the number of women working for foreign-related institutions, and departments of foreign affairs of ministerial-level institutions and associations are on the rise.

89. Women account for 16.5 per cent of the officials in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Among them, seven are department directors, nine deputy directors and eleven division chiefs.

90. During the reporting period, a great number of women attended conferences, seminars and workshops arranged by WHO, UNICEF and other United Nations specialized agencies and subsidiary organizations.

91. Quite a lot of women officials and experts are representing their governments in the work for the representative offices of the United Nations agencies, ICRC, IFRC and EU Cooperative Offices.

92. As a result of the increased admission of women into foreign language faculties of universities and the improved functions of special foreign languages training courses, a lot of women diplomats were trained, and the number of women career seekers in the field of external activities is on the increase.

93. The number of women working in foreign-related institutions and fields still falls short of the required standard. The DPRK will make further efforts to enhance the roles of women in the international arena as its relations with foreign countries broaden and cooperation and exchange expands in a diversified manner.

Article 9
Nationality

94. The Nationality Law of the DPRK is fully consistent with the principle of freedom of choice of nationality, the International Convention on the Conflict of Nationality and the Convention. Therefore, women in the DPRK enjoy equal rights with men in respect of acquisition, change and retaining of nationality. These rights are guaranteed by the Nationality Law and the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women, which stipulate that the DPRK nationality shall not change by reason of marriage, divorce, adoption or dissolution of adoption (art. 11) and women are entitled, on terms of equality with men, to acquire, change or retain their nationality, and the nationality of women in the DPRK shall not change for reasons of marriage or divorce (art. 13).

95. Women have equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children (see paras. 122-129 of the initial Report).

Article 10
Education

96. Women in the DPRK have equal rights with men to receive education at all levels and choose their major according to their wishes. The Socialist Constitution provides in article 73 that citizens have the right to education and this right is ensured by an advanced educational system and by the educational measures enacted by the State for the benefit of the people. The Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women provides in article 18 that women shall be ensured equal rights with men in the field of education, culture and health care and in article 19 that the educational guidance institution and the local people's committees shall give women equal access with men to schools at all levels and right to employment after graduation, and no woman shall be denied admission to a university or college nor subject to restrictions on account of being female, save for specially designated courses.

97. All stages of education from kindergarten to university are co-educational and educational institutions make no distinction between male and female when it comes to developing curricula, textbooks, reference books and other educational materials. Women have, on the basis of equality with men, access to the same educational programme, teaching staff with qualifications of the same standard and the same method of education, and no woman is subject to neglect on the grounds of being female.

98. The universal 11-year compulsory education system which had been in force in the DPRK since 1972 was replaced by the 12-year system in 2014, making preschool, primary and secondary education available and accessible to all children at the State expense. Complete equality is ensured at the stage of compulsory education, with no woman being subject to restrictions in the admission to schools or allowed to drop out.

99. Surveys conducted in 2008 and 2012 showed that there were a total of 3,743,513 students at primary and secondary schools, with girls accounting for 48.9 per cent thereof. Enrolment at primary schools was 1,394,397, of whom 683,526 or 49.0 per cent were girls, while enrolment at secondary schools was 2,349,116, of whom 1,147,089 or 48.8 per cent were girls. In 2008 and 2012 respectively, GIR of girls at primary schools were 101.4 per cent and 100.4 per cent and GER 101.6 per cent and 100.6 per cent, while GIR at secondary schools were 100.9 per cent and 100.3 per cent and GER 100.5 per cent and 101 per cent.

100. As of 2013, there were 4,822 primary schools, 4,366 junior secondary schools, 4,328 senior secondary schools, 460 colleges and 302 universities.

101. The enforcement during the past 40 years of the universal 11-year compulsory education resulted in attainment by women of enhanced cultural level and higher rate of completion of secondary education. According to the Population Census 2008 the GER of women up to the secondary schools were about the same in the urban and rural areas, but the rate of women that received higher education was higher in urban areas. Of all population above 16 years of age, the proportion of women in urban areas that received college, university and postgraduate education were 46.8 per cent and 28.6 per cent respectively, which was higher than those in rural areas by 5.2 per cent and 3.6 per cent.

102. Women that received secondary, vocational, college and university education were 79.9 per cent, 3.5 per cent, 6.7 per cent and 9.9 per cent respectively, which shows that the majority of women have received only secondary-level education and those that received university-level education make up only 10 per cent.

103. Every fifth woman engaged in economic activities received education at or above college and one out of ten went to universities and/or postgraduate courses.

104. Educational sector has a lot of women employees, making up 4.9 per cent of the working population disaggregated by sectors. According to the Population Census 2008 women accounted for 99 per cent, 86.8 per cent and 50.8 per cent of kindergarten, primary and secondary school teachers respectively and 24.2 per cent of college and university teachers.

105. Some of the higher education and vocational training institutions had a higher ratio of women to the others, which is due to preferences of women for certain career deemed suitable to their characteristics, talents and aptitudes.

106. It was a general trend in the past for women to seek careers in such fields as of commerce, education and health service, for these were regarded as befitting their physical features and personalities. For this reason, most of them chose to study at teacher training colleges, universities of education, medical studies, light industry and commerce, while few of them wished to pursue a career in natural sciences. As a result, the number of women at the former was very high, while the number in the latter, namely, the universities of technology, mechanical engineering and mining and metallurgy was low. The same was true of vocational training.

107. With the intensified school and social education aimed at raising women's awareness of their obligation to participate, on the basis of equality with men, in public life, as well as possibility to achieve the same as men do, the development of science and technology and raised women's status, tendencies to slight women and confine them to housework gave way to increased interest on the part of women in political affairs and their advancement into political and public life and scientific pursuits.

108. A well-organized system has been put in place for technical and vocational training for women without formal higher education qualifications.

109. Starting in 2009, tele-education system has been established at major universities and sci-tech diffusion bases of the country, with women's access thereto increasing year after year. This system spared women the trouble of having to stay away from home, enabling them to take courses at their homes, or nearest libraries or sci-tech diffusion bases for qualifications in the fields of their interests. For instance, as of 2015, about 10,000 students from 1,700 units were enrolled at the tele-college of the Kimchaek University of Technology, the highest seat of learning technology in the country, of whom women make up 60 per cent. The college produced 113 first-term graduates in 2015, of which 26 were women.

110. Efforts were made to improve the quality of education at colleges for the on-the-job education of workers, farmers and fishermen, skill-training schools or centres, skill-training courses and field courses on farms so that working women could have a good command of scientific knowledge and practical techniques in their respective areas of interest and master the use of machinery and equipment.

111. Workers without higher education qualifications were given lectures for two hours a day after work at factory colleges. After completing the 5-year course they were qualified as engineers. During the reporting period graduates of factory colleges played important roles in modernizing many units of the national economy including, for instance, the Chollima Steel Complex, of whom some were girl engineers.

112. Secondary school graduates attended 1-2-year skill-training schools on a full-time basis before being given work assignments. On-the-job training courses were also available to women, which were arranged by production units or workshops concerned for two hours a week, totalling 100 hours a year. Resource persons for such courses are the engineers and skilled workers of the factory or enterprise concerned.

113. A good education system has also been put in place for housewives, which is run by women's union. All housewives are included in this system, as study groups are organized with due consideration to their residential location and education. They meet once a week on a scheduled day to learn the State policy and laws,

scientific and technological information, home economics, health care and parenting skills, as well as sharing their views in that regard.

114. Women scientists and technicians made no less contribution than men to the economic development of the country and improvement of people's living. Quite a lot of women proved successful at scientific and technological festivals, presentations and exhibitions held every year at the national, sector-specific and regional levels. During the reporting period, women who were honoured with the titles of candidate academician, professor and associate professor and won degrees of PhD or MA/MS accounted for 19 per cent.

115. Efforts were made to make available to women a variety of information conducive to enhancing their roles in the family well-being and upbringing of their children. Periodicals like Korea Women and Socialist Culture of Life and books and DVDs like Family and Mothers, Encyclopaedia of Domestic Life and Rearing Children were produced to be widely disseminated. Mass media aired programmes concerning family ethics, home decoration and cooking, thus helping to promote happy and cultured family life.

Article 11
Employment

116. To work is the right of citizens in the DPRK, as well as their obligation and honour. All women are guaranteed their rights to work, to labour protection and to social security in accordance with the Socialist Constitution, the Socialist Labour Law, the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women, the Labour Protection Law, the Social Security Law and other related laws. The Socialist Constitution provides that "Citizens have the right to work. All able-bodied citizens are entitled to choose occupations in accordance with their wishes and skills and provided with suitable jobs and working conditions. Citizens shall work according to their abilities and be paid in accordance with the quantity and quality of their work" (art. 70). The Labour Law provides that "The State shall provide all conditions for women to take part in public activities. The local power organs and the State institutions, enterprises and social cooperative organizations shall develop nurseries, kindergartens, children's wards and public service facilities for the convenience of working women, and organize home industry workteams and home cooperatives so that women who do not go out to work may join them if they so wish" (art. 31). The Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women stipulates that "Women shall have equal rights with men to work. Local people's committees and institutions concerned shall ensure women, on the basis of equality with men, the rights to work, to labour protection and social security" (art. 26). In addition to this, many labour-related laws have specific provisions concerning women's working conditions, equal pay for equal work and occupations and sectors unfit for women.

117. In the DPRK it is the responsibility, as well as obligation of the State to realize people's rights to work by providing them with suitable jobs according to their wishes and skills.

118. A series of measures were taken during the reporting period with a view to achieving full realization of the women's right to work by designating new category of occupations suitable for them or expanding the scope of existing occupations.

119. A number of institutions, enterprises and organizations were newly established, creating conditions for women to take jobs suited to their abilities and work to the best of their skills. The number of factories in the field of light industry such as foodstuff, hosiery and cosmetics factories, institutions in health sector such as dental hospitals, paediatric hospitals and rehabilitation centres and schools like junior and senior secondary schools increased in number, requiring female workforce. On the other hand, the existing factories and enterprises modernized their production processes, enabling women to take jobs once done by men. A lot of enterprises and cooperatives organized production units accessible to women such as daily necessaries workteams and workshops.

120. As the Regulations on the Operation of Stalls were adopted in September, 2011, thousands of stalls were set up on the streets and villages to be run by women, creating jobs for them as well as catering to the needs of the general public.

121. A greater number of home industry workteams and sideline workteams were organized so that housewives, sick persons and old people may join them for the production of daily necessities, processing of subsidiary foodstuff, handcrafting, knitting and mending shoes, clothes and furniture.

122. The Regulations on the Assignment of Jobs were adopted for the purpose of promoting rational deployment of workforce. The Ministry of Labour and the labour administration institutions at the provincial, municipal and county levels annually conducted, in strict compliance with the Regulations, survey of job placement throughout the country and took necessary steps to ensure that everyone at working age and with ability is provided with the right job. Technical knowledge and skills, health status, gender and age were the main considerations in the job placement, with special emphasis put on properly designating occupations open to women, ensuring the prescribed proportion of women in the workforce in the sector concerned, placing by labour administration institutions of persons who fell sick at work (those medically certified to work less than eight hours a day) in light industry workshops and reintegrating them into their former units after full recovery and mandatory employment by institutions of ex-service women, disabled soldiers, blind, deaf and dumb people and persons with serious disabilities.

123. Discriminatory practices in job placement were strictly prohibited. The Ministry of Labour and all other institutions, enterprises and organizations were required to observe the requirements of article 28 of the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women, which provides that all institutions, enterprises and organizations shall not, while assigning jobs or employing workers, refuse to employ women or restrict their employment except for the occupations and areas that are unfit for them.

124. The fact that women make up 47.8 per cent of the workforce shows that women accounting for half of the population take an active part in public activities without being subjected to any discriminations and with their rights to work according to their wishes and abilities fully guaranteed.

125. The Ministry of Labour guided the labour administration institutions at all levels and institutions, enterprises and organizations towards proper placement and reassignment of jobs and conducted regular supervision and regulation. In case they refused to employ a person without valid reasons or defaulted on providing good

working and living conditions to workers, due sanctions such as suspension of provision of labour were applied.

126. Gender equality in remuneration is a long established practice in the DPRK. The Labour Law stipulates in article 37 that all working people shall receive equal remuneration for equal work irrespective of their gender, age and nationality. The Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women provides in article 31 that institutions, enterprises and organizations shall pay women equal remuneration with men for work of equal value. In accordance with these stipulations, no discrimination is allowed in the payment of rewards and all women receive remuneration according to the quantity and quality of the work done. In case a person deliberately makes a wrong assessment of the quantity and quality of work done and thus applies salary and bonus unjustifiably, a penalty of disciplining through labour is imposed on him/her in accordance with article 180 of the Criminal Law.

127. Women are entitled to additional remuneration in accordance with the law. Working women in pregnancy of over six months are given light jobs and receive average amount of their wages while on leave, and those with more than three children work six hours a day and receive wages equivalent to eight-hour work.

128. Legislative and practical measures were taken to ensure that women work in safe, cultured and hygienic working conditions. The Labour Protection Law adopted on July 8, 2010 and the extensively revised Regulations on Labour Protection contain specific provisions in respect of protection of women at work.

129. It is against the Law and Regulations to make women do work too arduous, harmful or dangerous for their physiological characteristics, and to work nursing and pregnant women on night shifts, overtime and on holidays (see para. 4 of the present Report).

130. Institutions and enterprises made it a rule to set up separate changing rooms and toilets for women, as well as nurseries, kindergartens, children's wards and welfare facilities, so that women could work without the least convenience. For instance, a new hostel equipped with excellent living conditions was built for the workers of the **Kim Jong Suk** Textile Factory in 2014. The nursery and kindergarten of the Pyongyang Essential Foodstuff Factory were renovated in a splendid fashion. The Namhung Youth Chemical Complex and many other local production units set up welfare facilities for women to be perfect by any standard.

131. The State strengthened supervision and regulation of the work relating to labour protection through the enhanced functions of the Ministry of Labour and the labour administration departments of the people's committees at all levels. For instance, the Ministry of Labour has in it a supervisory department of labour protection, which ensured that the Law and Regulations concerning labour protection were strictly observed through the enhanced roles of the supervisors in the factories, enterprises and organizations.

132. Criminal sanctions are applied for serious violations of the labour-related laws and Regulations. A person who causes loss of life or a serious accident by failing to provide labour protection and labour safety facilities is subject to reform through labour of not more than five years in accordance with article 176 of the Criminal Law. A person who causes loss of life, a serious accident or property damage through violation of the labour safety regulations is subject to the same penalty in

accordance with article 177 of the same law. A person who makes women do the kinds of work prohibited for them by law is subject to disciplining through labour of not more than one year in accordance with article 182 of the same law.

133. Women's rights to social security are guaranteed by the Law on Social Security adopted on January 9, 2008, the Implementing Regulations adopted on September 15, 2008 and the Regulations on Social Insurance adopted on October 13, 2008.

134. Persons in need of special protection by the State such as those who lost ability to work due to disease or disability, and old persons and children with no one to care for were granted incompetence allowance, disability allowance, nursing allowance or special allowance.

135. Workers, farmers and office workers under social security for losing ability to work due to disease or injury were provided with incompetence allowance on the basis of length of service; twenty years for men and fifteen years for women. Wounded ex-service persons and those suffering from occupational accidents were granted disability allowance and those tending these persons with nursing allowance.

136. New criterion was applied to calculating women's length of service in accordance with the newly adopted Implementing Regulation for the Law on Social Security, so that women who continued to work until they reached the retirement age could be given preferential treatment.

137. Women with three or more children, triplets or quadruplets were provided with special allowance, while families of children without parents, of old persons without children, of disabled couples with children were provided with supplementary living allowance.

138. People's committees at all levels carried out regular survey of the situation of the persons under social security and addressed problems including through arranging medical check-up for them, providing them with medicines and tonics for rehabilitation and sending those in need of recuperation to health resorts.

139. Baby homes and orphanages equipped with all the necessary facilities for the nursing and upbringing of children were built in Pyongyang and Kangwon Province in 2014 and 2015 respectively, and those in other provinces were newly built patterned after them, where children are growing happily free from sorrow of orphans. Nursing home in Pyongyang was newly built, provided with good conditions and environment for the carefree, healthy life of old people and other provinces are in the process of building new ones for the old people there. Most of the people in the Pyongyang Old People's Home are women.

140. The atmosphere of respecting, caring for and supporting children, women and elderly people pervades the society. A lot of people take orphans and old people into their homes and take care of them with parental and fraternal affection. People's committees and social organizations in the area concerned, as well as neighbours, take it upon themselves to support such families, providing them with new dwelling houses, necessaries of life and treating them as a member of their families.

Article 12
Health care

141. The DPRK regards it as an important principle of the State activities to look after the health of people in a responsible manner.

142. The Socialist Constitution provides that "Citizens are entitled to medical care. This right is ensured by free medical care, an expanding network of hospitals, sanatoria and other medical institutions, State social insurance and other social security systems" (art. 72) and "The State shall afford special protection to mothers and children by providing maternity leave, reduced working hours for mothers with many children, a wide network of maternity hospitals, nurseries and kindergartens, and other measures" (art. 77). The Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women provides that "Women shall have equal access to health-care services with men. Public health institutions shall be equipped with medical facilities for the treatment of women's diseases and protection of their health and ensure that women receive medical treatment without any inconvenience. The institutions, enterprises and organizations concerned shall preferentially provide women with conditions for medical treatment" (art. 24).

143. There are also a series of laws in force for the protection of women's health such as the Public Health Law, the Law on the Nursing and Upbringing of Children, the Law on the Protection of Persons with Disabilities, the Law on the Protection of the Elderly, the Law on the Prevention of Communicable Diseases, the Law on Medical Care, the Law on the Administration of Medical Supplies, Food Hygiene Law, Public Hygiene Law, Environment Protection Law, Family Law, etc.

144. Women access health-care services on the basis of equality with men and receive special medical benefits from the State.

145. The main point of the health policy of the DPRK is to thoroughly carry out the prophylactic line in all health programmes, to ensure the complete and universal free medical care and to wage a Devoted Service Movement among health workers.

146. The foundation of the health system of the DPRK is the household doctor system universal coverage free of charge and the provision of primary health care. Full coverage of immunization and maternal and child health (MCH) services through strengthening the women's health-care system based on the household doctor system has been a priority area for the development of health sector.

147. During the reporting period, all types of medical services including antenatal, delivery and postnatal cares were provided free under the complete and universal medical care system, pregnant and lactating women received special health-care services and MCH were protected from being affected by multi-parities and too often pregnancies and deliveries.

148. All the expenses required for nursing and upbringing the children were paid by the State, thus easing women's burden of child upbringing, ensuring their full participation in public activities and promoting health of working women.

149. With regard to para. 46 of the Concluding Comments hospitals and clinics equipped with modern facilities have been set up rationally in urban and rural areas, factories, enterprises and sea and forestry villages, specialized hospitals including maternity hospitals and paediatric hospitals and sanatoria have been set up, while the level of specialization has been continuously improved.

150. As of 2014, there were 1,829 hospitals including central, provincial, general and specialized hospitals, 55 preventive stations, 6,263 poly-clinics and clinics and 682 sanatoria for preventive and curative cares. There were also 235 hygiene and anti-epidemic institutions that are responsible for controlling communicable diseases at central, provincial, city, district/county levels.

151. All people receive preventive and curative services on a regular basis by 45,000 responsible household doctors under the section doctor system, under which one doctor is responsible for about 130 households. Ri-hospitals and polyclinics have been restructured to meet the requirements of developing realities and health-care system.

152. Under the reproductive health (RH)-related State medical service system, there are polyclinics in urban areas and ri-hospitals in rural areas at primary health care level, and OB/GYN sections and paediatric sections at city (or district) and county hospitals at secondary health care level, while paediatric hospitals and maternity hospitals are at provincial levels. At the central level there are Pyongyang Maternity Hospital and Okryu Children's Hospital.

153. Women working at factories and enterprises benefit from dual health care, namely, from the doctors in charge at the in-house hospitals and the household doctors at the clinics in the places of their residence.

154. Women's health were promoted through regular medical check-up, counselling and specialized treatment at primary health facilities, while all pregnant women were cared by the specialized doctors of OB/GYN departments through timely registration and appropriate care. Timely interventions were made for women with complications through strengthening the referral system to a higher level.

155. Modern Breast Tumour Institute, a comprehensive base for the diagnosis, treatment and research of breast-related diseases, has been established in 2012 under the Pyongyang Maternity Hospital, breast cancer sections newly set up at provincial maternity hospitals and the screening and referral system of breast cancer established nationwide.

156. Family counselling sections have been organized at provincial, municipal and county level hospitals in 2015 to promote the RH related counselling services in a favourable environment.

157. The National Coordinating Committees for Maternal and Child Disease Management have been established on a non-standing basis in the Ministry of Public Health and a technical working group for maternal health has been organized in 2006.

158. The following principles are maintained in considering the needs for training health workers; to keep the regional balance of health service needs, to meet the needs by specialized sections, to raise the rate of traditional doctors systematicaliy, to consider the world health and medical development trends, to increase the proportion of women health workers in pharmacies, dental, ophthalmology, ENT (ears, nose and throat), neck and head surgery, paediatric, and OB/GYN departments.

159. There are more than 200 training institutions for health personnel including 15 central and provincial medical universities, 66 nurse training schools, midwifery schools, prosthetic schools, massage therapist schools, X-ray schools, while efforts

are made to strengthen the system of full-time education, e-learning and refresher training.

160. Health education system has been well established and operated. There are specialized health education agencies, which are Health Education Institute at central level, Health Education Halls at provincial level and Health Education Rooms at county hygiene and anti-epidemic stations. Information, education and communication (IEC) staff and household doctors of health facilities are responsible for health education. Dissemination system through the Grand People's Study House and libraries at provincial, municipal and county levels, social organizations such as Women's Union, the newspaper People's Health and TV have also played an important role in IEC activities. RH-related information is disseminated through IEC networks, while health education programme through mass media and publication has been promoted.

161. The 8-month paid maternity leave has been introduced from 2015, ensuring enough breastfeeding for children and full rest for the health recovery of mothers.

162. An effective environment hygiene system has been put in place from central to the municipal/county level. On the occasions of the Months of Hygiene-March and April and Months of Hygiene-September and October every year, hygiene and safety surveillance has been conducted strictly. The departments for environment hygiene and child hygiene were newly organized at each level of hygiene and anti-epidemic institutes or stations in January, 2013.

163. The main focus of the health sector is to give full play to the advantages of the socialist health system through further improving and strengthening the hygienic and anti-epidemic initiatives and the section doctor system, giving priority to MCH, providing more sincere care to the population, advancing the health information system, developing the medical science and technology rapidly and consolidating the self-reliant industries of pharmaceutics and medical instrument.

164. The Medium Term Strategic Plan for the Development of the Health Sector in the DPRK (2010-2015) was developed in 2011. According to this strategic plan, achieving MDG 4 and 5 aimed at reduction of maternal and child mortality by two thirds of the levels of 1990 by 2015 and bringing about a significant reduction in the incidence and infection of malaria and Tuberculosis (TB) has been set as an objective and great efforts have been made to realize this. This plan sets forth main objectives, contents of activities and targets of implementation in the areas of health system strengthening, prevention and control of communicable and non-communicable diseases, etc.

165. Following the successful implementation of the National RH Strategy (2006-2015) developed in 2006, the RH Strategy (2011-2015) related to the MCH, the strategic area 4 of the Medium Term Strategic Plan for the Development of the Health Sector in the DPRK (2010-2015) was developed and objectives to be achieved by 2015 in the area of RH identified. This strategy covers 8 strategic areas; 1) safe maternal and neonatal care, 2) quality family planning (FP) services, 3) prevention, detection and management of reproductive tract infection (RTI)/sexually transmitted infection (STI) and HIV, 4) safe abortion, 5) treatment of infertility, 6) early detection and treatment of cervical cancer and breast cancer, 7) treatment of menopausal disorder, 8) adolescent health. It also covers the two

vital areas, which are strengthening health system and humanitarian responding plan focusing on RH during floods and other natural disasters.

166. Delivery management system based on the use of partogram has been established from March 2010 aiming at reducing maternal mortality through scientific management of complications during the delivery. 30 thousand copies of partogram and antenatal cards were produced each year.

167. Health Education Strategy for RH (2013-2015) was developed based on the results of Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) Survey on RH (2011), which was made public in 2012. This strategy has set the strategic ways of IEC programme to be conducive to maternal health improvement, quality FP, prevention and treatment of cervical cancer, safe abortion and RH of youth.

168. Guidelines of OB/GYN treatment 2006, Clinical Guidelines of Women's Health 2007 and Training Module of Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care 2012 (for ri-level participants) were developed and distributed, and Guidelines of Women's Health is under updating. Refresher Training Module for Household Doctors developed in 2010 aims at improving clinical knowledge and skills of household doctors focusing on maternal, neonatal and child care, RH, nutrition and emergency cares.

169. IEC programmes have been implemented on a wide scale based on health education halls, public places and villages, with the involvement of health workers, staff of educational institutions and students of universities, colleges and middle schools. Health information and knowledge tailored to the age peculiarities of students were spread through TV and publications.

170. To facilitate the prevention and treatment of postpartum haemorrhage and eclampsia, the main causes of maternal deaths, Prevention and Treatment of Postpartum Haemorrhage and Prevention and Treatment of Pre-eclampsia and Eclampsia were developed in 2015 and disseminated to OB/GYN doctors at different levels. Posters for health workers such as Use of Oxytocin, Use of Magnesium Sulphate, Management of Pre-eclampsia and Eclampsia, Management of Pre-natal Haemorrhage, Management of Post-partum Haemorrhage and Management of Puerperal Sepsis were developed and disseminated in 2009.

171. Intervention to implement BCG inoculation for all newborns within 24 hours of birth has been made since 2010, with the result that immunization has been implemented soundly for all the targeted children.

172. Arrangements were made in September 2010 to make central maternity hospital to be responsible for antenatal, delivery and postnatal care provision for all triplets, thus ensuring their healthy birth and development.

173. Technical workshops for OB/GYN doctors and midwives at all levels on emergency obstetric and neonatal care were conducted in 2009.

174. Technical workshop on client-oriented providers' efficiency was conducted in 2008 for OB/GYN doctors, midwives and managers of maternity hospitals aiming at improving RH services. The programme of visual inspection with 3 per cent of acetic acid has been introduced from 2007 and local training for OB/GYN doctors nationwide was conducted following the development of the Guideline of Cervical Cancer Management in 2008.

175. Visual inspection with 3 per cent of acetic acid and breast screening have been conducted for all clients visiting OB/GYN sections from May, 2010, resulting in 50 per cent reduction in the proportion of late visits by cervical cancer and breast cancer patients.

176. On the occasion of World Population Day, World Health Day and Child Health Day every year seminars, experience-sharing, photo exhibition, IEC material development and introduction through intranet were conducted actively to enhance awareness of RH importance among officials, women and general public.

177. Through regular antenatal and postnatal counselling women are provided with the information on the importance and contents of antenatal care, nutrition and hygiene during pregnancy, fetal care, importance of institutional delivery and delivery assisted by trained health workers, neonatal care and breastfeeding, postnatal care and male involvement in RH programmes.

178. One hundred thousand copies of folder Bringing Up Children Strong and Healthy were printed and disseminated in 2012 and 2014 respectively.

179. Ambulance cars have been supplied to each of provincial maternity hospitals and county hospitals for timely referral of women with high risk during pregnancy and delivery, and various kinds of equipment, medicines and consumables including RH kits necessary for RH services have been supplied to OB/GYN sections at provincial, county and ri levels during the reporting period.

180. National Strategic Plan for the Improvement of Essential Drugs (2008-2012) which was developed in 2007 was successfully implemented. And National Strategic Plan for the Improvement of Drug Management (2013-2017) aimed at improving the utility of essential drugs which was developed in February 2013 is now under implementation. This plan will ensure the provision of sufficient medicines including essential drugs to meet the requirements of the State for the improvement of the people's health to a higher level.

181. Overseas and local trainings on Minimum Initial Service Package for RH service during emergency situation were conducted with the assistance of international organizations in 2008 and non-permanent coordinating agency for service provision of MCH care during emergency and disaster situations was organized. Workshop on minimum initial service package for RH in crisis situation was conducted at national and provincial level in 2008. Technical workshop on coordinating mechanism for MCH care in emergency situation such as flood and emergency service contents for MCH care was conducted for officials of health affairs departments of county people's committees and OB/GYN doctors of county hospitals in flood-prone south Phyongan, south Hwanghae, Kangwon and south Hamgyong Provinces. Starting in 2008, medical supplies to be used for MCH care during emergency situation have been stockpiled, which are replaced with new ones every year. In addition, Guidelines on the Use of RH Emergency Kits were developed for local health workers and relevant trainings were conducted.

182. Interventions for the improved RH were taken based on the results of surveys and researches on RH conducted in close cooperation with the Central Bureau of Statistics, Academy of Medical Sciences, Institute of Health Administration and Population Centre.

183. Population Census 2008, Survey on Maternal Mortality 2009, National RH Survey 2010, Quality Assessment of RH Service 2010 and KAP Survey on RH 2011 were conducted with the support of UNFPA, while Multi-Indicator Cluster Survey 2009 and National Nutrition Survey 2012 were conducted with the assistance of UNICEF for the purpose of assessing the MCH status, service coverage and types including health information dissemination, and mortality and its main causes. Annual Report on the Changes in Key Indicators for Health including MCH in the DPRK was prepared in 2013 with the aim of assessing the maternal health and nutritional status.

184. Some information on maternal deaths was collected through the Population Census 2008 and on this basis, survey on maternal mortality was conducted in 2009.

185. Maternal mortality ratio was 97 per 100,000 live births in 2002, which dropped to 62.7 in 2012. 58.5 per cent thereof was due to direct obstetric causes, of which the death rate by haemorrhage was 50 per cent. The death rate due to direct obstetric causes was higher in rural than urban areas.

186. Proportion of births attended by skilled health personnel increased from 96.9 per cent in 2002 to 99.1 per cent in 2012. According to the survey results of 2011, most births were attended by doctors, with 87 per cent in urban and 75 per cent in rural areas. The institutional delivery rate among delivered women was 87.9 per cent and the delivery at home and other places accounted for 12.1 per cent. Health institutions have taken substantial interventions aimed at reduction of home delivery.

187. A majority of pregnant women (60 per cent) were registered at the first trimester (before 3 months) of pregnancy, and antenatal registration rate before 4 months has increased, which shows that quality of antenatal care has improved.

188. The proportion of women who received antenatal care services more than 4 times was about 94 per cent in 2011, contributing to the reduced maternal mortality ratio in a positive way.

189. The tetanus toxoid immunization coverage among pregnant women was 97.8 per cent in 2012.

190. An effective women-counselling system has been established to ensure free FP services for the couples based on their needs. Informed choice has been promoted among the couples. FP services have been provided in the hospitals and clinics at all levels under the guidance of the Ministry of Public Health.

191. FP was set as one of main strategic areas of the RH Strategy (2011-2015). The goal of FP is to reduce the unmet needs of modern contraceptive methods to below 12 per cent by 2015 through enhancing the awareness and utility of various contraceptive methods for controlling the number and space of births among women and men, thereby reducing the fatal risks of delivery to women and children and further promoting the health and well-being of families, communities and the whole population.

192. Contraceptive prevalence rate among married women was reported to be 70.7 per cent in 2011, 67.3 per cent of which used modern contraceptive method.

193. Abortion is legal in the DPRK. Abortion service is provided upon request by the woman concerned for reasons of risks to her life, physical and mental health and

fetal malformation. In accordance with the directive of the Ministry of Public Health issued in July, 2015 appropriate measures were taken to ensure the provision of satisfactory post-abortion management for the women who experienced spontaneous and induced abortion.

194. Abortion rate was 9.9 per 1,000 married women according to the results of KAP Survey on RH conducted in 2011.

195. The prevention of abortion complications through provision by health institutions of safe abortion and post-abortion management services has been set as one of objectives in RH Strategy (2011-2015). Local training on the use of manual vacuum extractor was conducted for health providers and necessary equipment and instruments were provided. Post-abortion counselling, FP and referral services, as appropriate, were provided. Male involvement in the RH and assisting women and children with their health has been promoted.

196. Multi Indicator Survey 2009 and National Nutrition Survey 2012 were conducted to assess the nutritional and health status of children and mothers and to identify the strategies and priority areas for the improvement thereof. Strategy and Action Plan to Control Child and Maternal Malnutrition (2014-2018) which was developed in 2015 is now under implementation. This strategy contains detailed objectives and activities for the rational management of nutrition of mothers and children during the first 1,000 days of life from the pregnancy to 2 years, the most important period in their intensive nutritional management.

197. Iron and folic acid were supplied to women aged 23-28 before pregnancy once a week, iron-folic acid tablets and micronutrients provided to pregnant and lactating women every day and nutrients and well-balanced food provided to pregnant women according to their gestational age, thus preventing anaemia during the pregnancy and ensuring scientific child health care from the fetus. Mebendazole supplying system has been established for the treatment of parasites infection as one of intervention for the prevention of anaemia during pregnancy.

198. Colostrum feeding is promoted within 1 hour of delivery at maternity hospitals and OB/GYN sections of county and ri-level hospitals. As of 2012, all provincial maternity hospitals won the title of Baby Friendly Hospital, which is expanding to county level.

199. 5,000 copies of the poster titled 10 Steps for Breastfeeding were printed and disseminated, while the importance and components of rational nutrition during the first 1,000 days of life widely informed through newspapers, radios and TV. Leaflets, desktop calendars and training curriculum with the title of Common Knowledge of Maternal and Child Nutrition were developed and DVD titled Friend of Breastfeeding Mothers was developed and disseminated. The importance and advantages of breastfeeding was presented through colourful events including seminars and photo exhibitions on the occasion of the World Breastfeeding Week every year, and different types of IEC materials such as folders, leaflets and posters designed to promote breastfeeding were developed and disseminated to the target groups.

200. New Malaria Control Strategic Plan (2014-2017) and TB Control Strategic Plan (2014-2017) have been developed in May and August, 2013 respectively, following the implementation of National Strategic Plan for Malaria Control (2008-2013) and National Strategic Plan for TB Control (2008-2013) developed in 2008.

201. Mass Prophylactic Primaquine Therapy was implemented for several million people in malaria epidemic areas in 2007, 2014 and 2015, and distribution of Long Lasting Insecticide Treated Nets and indoor residence spraying were conducted in malaria high-risk areas. According to the annual report for 2014 prepared by the Central Hygiene and Anti-Epidemic Institute, malaria incidence rate was 0.7 per 1,000, of which 42 per cent was women.

202. National Guideline for TB Control (4th edition) has been updated. The number of laboratories for TB diagnosis at all levels has increased to 359 and recording and reporting system has been strengthened. DOTS programme has been implemented for TB treatment since 2007, resulting in high success rate of treatment and decrease of death rate. The assistance programme of Global Fund for Fight against AIDS, TB and Malaria has contributed to the successful implementation of the national TB control programme.

203. With regard to para. 48 of the Concluding Comments, no HIV/AIDS case have been reported so far in the DPRK. National Mid-term Plan and National Strategic Plan for HIV/AIDS Control were developed and the objectives set for 2009-2012 were achieved. New Multi-Sectoral National Strategic Plan for the Prevention and Control of HIV/AIDS has been developed and the function of the National HIV/AIDS Committee has been strengthened accordingly. This strategic plan highlights HIV/AIDS preventive interventions for mothers and children.

204. The regular testing system against the risks of HIV/AIDS transmission from outside has been established and epidemiological surveillance teams organized at points of entry such as international airports, border railway stations and trade ports, as well as at the Central Hygiene and Anti-Epidemic Institute. IEC activities were conducted vigorously through different channels to disseminate correct knowledge and information on HIV/AIDS and the prevention thereof.

205. Guidelines on Practical Skills for RTI/STI 2007 and Early Detection and Management of Cervical Cancer and Breast Cancer 2009 have been developed and the Guidelines on RTI Management have been updated in 2011 and 2014.

206. KAP Survey on RH conducted in 4 selected provinces in 2011 covered youth respondents aged 17-24, assessing their awareness of FP method and the source of information, coverage of service delivery, etc.

207. Adolescent health has been included as one of the 8 components of RH Strategies (2011-2015). The provision of RH service and information to adolescents (aged 10-19) and the youth (aged 20-24) has been set as the main objective of the strategy, and accordingly, development of comprehensive health strategy for adolescents, dissemination of information necessary for their health through appropriate channels and means and improvement of their nutrition through school/university health programmes are under implementation. Strategic targets and main activities to contribute to the improved health of women with menopausal disorders have also been included in the strategy.

208. Adolescent health issues, as well as detailed service items to be provided by household doctors to address health and social issues among elderly people have been integrated into the Curriculum of Refresher Training for Household Doctors newly developed in 2010.

209. The Korean FP and MCH Association has integrated adolescent health issues into its Strategic Framework for 2011-2015 as an important component and set detailed objectives, strategies and main activities aimed at meeting the RH needs of adolescents. It has also conducted diversified activities such as peer education through popular education channels and by youth volunteers, training workshops for enhancing parents' awareness of the issues and improving their counselling skills, developing family education modules and many kinds of publications, training followed by development of service guideline for youth friendly services and learning approaches, provision of hotline service specialized for the youth, creating youth friendly service environment through setting apart time and space for the youth and holding youth forums. It developed Guidelines for Adolescent Education, Service Guidelines for Adolescents, Moral Education for Adolescents and A Companion of Adolescents in 2012 to be used for IEC activities to raise the awareness of the adolescents. Youth RH information were disseminated through homepage of the Grand People's Study House, while a joint meeting was organized to discuss on the youth-centred services with the participation of service providers from Pyongyang Maternity Hospital, Pyongyang Medical University Hospital of **Kim Il Sung** University and KFP and MCHA FP clinics, and a pilot project was developed based on the recommendations made in the meeting, which is under implementation.

210. The Korean Association for Supporting the Disabled was upgraded to be the Korean Federation for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities in July 2005 with a view to providing an overall and unified protection for the persons with disabilities. Technical books to be used for protection and rehabilitation of the persons with disabilities including Reference Book for the Health Care of Women with Disabilities were published to meet the special needs for their health.

Article 13
Economic and cultural benefits

211. The Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women provides that women shall have rights on terms of equality with men to the security of person and property and no one shall commit acts that constitute violations of these rights (art. 36).

212. Married women share the ownership of family property with their husbands. Women are entitled, without regard to their income, to possess, use and dispose of the family property on the basis of equality with men. In the case of divorce, they can claim the right to their private property, with family property divided by mutual agreement. In case of failure in agreement, the court settles the problem in consideration of the actual situation of both parties and on the principle of protecting the interests of the children and the wife.

213. The State continued, during the reporting period, to pursue the policy of building dwelling houses at its expense and providing them to people for free, thus ensuring them the conditions to live a stable and highly civilized life. Tens of thousands of modern dwelling houses were built in the capital city and local areas, and the existing ones renovated and refurbished. In recent years alone, new streets named Mansudae and Changjon Streets, and Wisung and Mirae Scientists Streets were built in a splendid fashion, providing new homes for thousands of families. In

particular, thousands of houses were newly built at the State expense in Rason when it suffered heavy floods in 2015.

214. Allowances under the social insurance scheme were provided to workers, farmers and office workers in order to promote their health and secure them good conditions for relaxation, and to stabilize their life or provide medical treatment in case they lose ability to work due to disease, injury, pregnancy or delivery. Social insurance includes temporary allowance, maternity allowance and funeral allowance, as well as accommodation at health resorts and holiday homes, and study tours at the State expense. Temporary allowance is paid on the basis of the number of days as specified in the sick note or other papers and in consideration of the person's salary and length of service. Maternity allowance is paid every month, which is equivalent to 100 per cent of a woman's monthly salary. Accommodation at health resorts and holiday homes includes 15-day benefits while working, 30-day benefits for health recovery, 5-day holiday for those working underground or on non-stop shifts and 15-, 20- and 30-day holidays for cultural life.

215. Expenses for traveling to and from the health resorts, holiday homes, sanatoria, places for educational visits and prosthesis factories are covered by the institution or enterprise concerned, and in the case of a person on social security such expenses are covered by the people's committee or the farm concerned.

216. Women freely participate in sports on a basis of equality with men. The Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women provides that women have equal access with men to recreational activities, and institutions, enterprises and organizations shall provide them with necessary conditions to engage in scientific, technological, literary and artistic pursuits, as well as in sports (art. 23). The Law on Sports provides that making sports mass-based and part of daily routine is the fundamental principle of the State policy on sports and all necessary conditions shall be created to achieve realization of the policy. The policy of making sports mass-based and part of daily concern means non-discrimination in the area of sports.

217. The National Inter-Province Sports Competition has been held annually since 2013 as part of the efforts to develop sports on a mass scale, which is open to men and women of all ages, including housewives. Day of Sports is designated, when all people including children and women take part in diverse sports activities, training their bodies and mind.

218. State investment in and social support for the development of sports increased, with the result that modern sports and cultural facilities like Masikryong Ski Resort, Munsu Water Park and Mirim Riding Club were built, and sports bases like the May Day Stadium, Pyongyang Indoor Stadium and Chongchun Sports Area underwent a complete renovation. To cite nationwide achievements in this regard during the past four years alone, 90 stadiums, 130 indoor stadiums, 1,800 football pitches, 340 roller skating grounds and 280 sports parks have been newly built or renovated.

219. Recreation grounds and welfare establishments equipped with modern facilities have been set up in different parts of the country for all the people including women to conduct cultural, sports and other leisure activities. For instance, theatres and movies like the State Playhouse and Taedongmun Movie House, parks and recreation grounds like Rungna People's Recreation Ground, Taesongsan Fun Fair, Kaeson Youth Park and Pyongyang Folklore Park, People's

Outdoor Ice Rink, Ryugyong Health Complex and Tongil Street Health Centre have been newly built or refurbished on modern lines. Parks of various types and areas like children's parks, sports parks and flower parks have been set up for each and every community. Indoor and outdoor swimming pools and stadiums have been newly built at schools, and children's camps and holiday homes such as the Songdowon International Children's Camp and the Yonphung Scientists' Holiday Home have been newly built in scenic spots or facelifted.

220. Playgrounds, indoor stadiums and swimming pools at primary and secondary schools, as well as recreation grounds, roller skating grounds, parks and fun fairs in communities are accessible to all children for their sports and physical training activities. The Rungna people's recreation ground and other fun fairs with a variety of amusement facilities such as the game arcade, 3D rhythmic cinema and mirror house, where children have great fun during their leisure, have been newly built in recent years.

221. Schoolchildren's palaces, and culture halls and after-school sports schools were operated on a regular basis, providing children with opportunities to fully develop their talents at places of their choice. Currently, there are 20 schoolchildren's palaces, 178 schoolchildren's culture halls and 19 Children's Union camps.

222. Various types of sports, literary and arts competitions were organized in an effort to promote sports and arts activities nationwide. Singing contests, general knowledge quiz and sports games were organized for housewives, and children's Paduk games, kindergarteners' art festivals, national schoolchildren's art festivals, calligraphy and writing contests were held.

223. Women made great contributions to developing sports science and skills. Those gifted with sporting skills were recruited to professional teams to give full play to their talents. The fact that a lot of the DPRK sportswomen won gold medals at World Championships, Olympic Games and other international or regional events shows that they are fully enjoying their rights to sports and cultural life. In particular, women footballers won the East Asia Cup Game for three consecutive years by 2015, while many other sportswomen won championship medals in the gymnastics, judo, marathon, table tennis and Taekwondo, adding lustre to the country and adored by people.

224. All necessary facilities were provided for people to fully enjoy cultural life and the expenses so spent were borne by the State, or institutions, enterprises or social-cooperative organizations.

225. Libraries have been set up in each and every administrative unit of the DPRK in consideration of the level of cultural development, number of users and telecommunication conditions in the unit concerned. All institutions, enterprises and organizations have their own libraries. During the reporting period a lot of e-libraries and sci-tech diffusion rooms were set up to provide information service through computer network, schoolchildren's libraries built in every city and county and thousands of mobile libraries opened not only in cities but even in villages, creating conditions for people to acquire sufficient knowledge.

226. Various types of cultural institutions such as theatres, play houses, culture halls and movie houses were set up at the central and provincial level. Every county has a culture hall and all institutions and enterprises have either culture halls or rooms, which are open to all men and women.

227. Amateur art troupes and art propaganda teams were organized at all institutions, enterprises, social cooperative organizations and wherever there are working people so that workers, farmers, youth, as well as women could participate in cultural and arts activities of their choice. Various kinds of cultural events such as national people's art festivals, singing contests respectively of workers, farmers, housewives and students, fine arts and photo exhibitions were organized every year on major occasions like the March 8 International Women's Day and Mothers' Day.

228. Housewives presented their own works such as stories, poems and paintings to the national prize contests of literary and art works, and successful participants were recruited, if they so wish, to be professional writers or painters, gaining in popularity among the public. Many of the famous songs, film scenarios, novels and poems were written by professional or amateur female writers. There are also a lot of professional female artists widely known and adored by people across the country.

229. A series of measures were taken to ensure persons with disabilities the rights to take part in sports and cultural activities, with tangible progress. The Korean Sports Association of Persons with Disabilities and the Korean Art Association of Persons with Disabilities were formed in 2010 and 2012 respectively to be affiliated to the Korean Federation for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities. The former organized a variety of sports activities involving persons with disabilities including, for instance, four national table-tennis tournaments of persons with disabilities and amateurs, thus raising public awareness of the disability and creating favourable environment and conditions for mainstreaming them into social life. As a result, persons with disabilities took part in the 14th International Paralympics in 2012 and the 3rd Asian Youth Para Games. The latter also organized various forms of art events for children with disabilities on the occasion of the National/International Day of Persons with Disabilities in June and December every year, giving them opportunities to fully display their potentials and abilities.

Article 14
Women in rural areas

230. The DPRK directed special attention to ensuring rural women the enjoyment of the rights to public and political life, education, health service and employment.

231. Protection and promotion of the right of rural people including women are the responsibilities of the county people's committees. The adoption in 2010 of the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women enhanced these committees' concern about and roles in that regard. They integrated in their yearly action plans the work for women, children, persons with disabilities and elderly people and ensured that they were fully implemented. Women make up 27 per cent of the deputies to local people's assemblies.

232. Measures were taken to increase the proportion of women among the staff of the ri-office, the grassroots administrative unit, and leading officials of farms and other agriculture-related institutions and enterprises. Competent women were appointed to such managerial posts as managers of farms and other rural units and prominence was given to their achievements and necessary working conditions were provided for them, with the result that many of them were qualified to be elected deputies to the Supreme People's Assembly and local people's assemblies, making up almost half of the women deputies to people's assemblies at all levels. Women account for 18 per cent of all the farm managers in the country. They play important

roles in ensuring that women's wishes and demands, and matters related to the protection and promotion of their rights are reflected in the action plans of the local people's committees and sector-specific plans and properly implemented.

233. Rural women with due qualifications were given 2-year education at provincial cadre training schools to be promoted to managerial posts in the agricultural sector, which led to the increase of the proportion of women in the county-level institutions and farms.

234. All rural women enjoy the same benefits of free medical service and education as urban women in accordance with the Law on Public Health, the Law on Education and the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women.

235. The DPRK has made it an important principle in the health planning to narrow the gap between urban and rural areas, and between flat and mountainous areas in the distribution of health service network and health personnel and implemented it consistently.

236. Students from counties, rural and coal mining areas were given more opportunities to study at universities and colleges of medical studies and training institutions of health workers to prevent professional health workers concentrating in urban areas, central and provincial hospitals in particular.

237. Specialized departments such as internal medicine, paediatric, surgical, OB/GYN, Koryo medicine and dental departments, as well as laboratories and in-patient rooms have been deployed in ri-hospitals, the main primary health-care units in rural areas. They conducted IEC activities, vaccination, emergency calls, home visits, counselling for women, delivery care and postnatal care services.

238. Given that about 40 per cent of deliveries are conducted at the ri-levels, the hospitals and clinics concerned were supplied with essential equipment, instruments, drugs and facilities for in-patient treatment. Technical workshops were organized for the purpose of training health workers in these units in the method of assisting abnormal delivery. Training Guidelines for Management of Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care 2012 was developed for distribution to ri-level midwives and doctors and relevant training was organized for them.

239. Various kinds of RH services for rural women such as pregnancy tests, breast self-examination for the detection of breast cancer, diagnosis and treatment of RTIs, newborn and child care services were provided at FP clinics and by outreach clinics in the rural areas.

240. Rural IEC volunteers familiarized female farmers with modern FP methods, breastfeeding, child rearing, health care during pregnancy and management of menopausal symptoms, and general knowledge about gynaecological diseases.

241. The proportion of rural households accessing safe drinking water is on the increase, while consistent efforts are made to further increase the proportion of improved toilets.

242. Rural women benefit greatly from the high-tech tele-medicine service introduced nationwide since 2012. This network linking the general hospitals, Pyongyang Maternity Hospitals and Okryu Children's Hospital at the central level with their counterparts at the provincial level and 200 county hospitals provides

counselling, education and surgery, enabling women to fully enjoy their rights to health care.

243. Measures were taken to create sufficient conditions and environment for education of students in remote rural areas. The State issued a directive on building branch schools for children in areas with poor traveling conditions and accordingly, hundreds of branch schools were built under the guidance of the local people's committees and through social support. As of 2015, there were 500 branch schools with an enrolment of about 20 students and 100 branch schools with an enrolment of 10 students.

244. Rural women are provided with opportunities to receive vocational training. Some of them receive formal education at universities or colleges of agriculture in the area concerned to be qualified as agricultural experts. Women who work on the farm after graduating secondary schools learn at farm colleges, the number of which is on the rise. Young rural women attend tele-universities of their choice. All farms have sci-tech diffusion rooms, where farmers access a variety of information on modern science and technology and in the fields of their interest.

245. A series of measures were taken by the State to improve the living conditions of residents in rural areas and islets, bringing about a radical change in their quality and appearances. Nurseries, kindergartens and schools, to say nothing of dwelling houses, were renovated and refurbished as a result of the concentrated investment by the State and nationwide support, making it possible for women to take an active part in public life and enjoy more cultured life.

246. With regard to para. 42 of the Concluding Comments, the Law on Farms was amended and the Regulations on Self-Management of Farms were adopted, leading to the introduction of a new agricultural management method aimed at incentivizing farmers and increased grain output year by year, and bringing about significant progress in resolving food problem of rural residents including women.

247. Markets or branch markets were set up for rural working women to sell products of their kitchen gardens or exchange them for another, thus making it possible for them to earn extra income.

Article 15
Equality before the law and in civil matters

248. The DPRK has effectively realized equality of women with men before the law and in civil matters in accordance with the Socialist Constitution which accorded women equal social status and rights with men.

249. The Civil Law provides that all citizens shall be equal with regard to civil rights and no one shall restrict his/her civil rights unless otherwise provided for in the law (art. 19). Equal civil rights are ensured to all citizens without any distinction as to gender, nationality, religious belief, property status and education, and they are fully guaranteed by the socialist system.

250. The Civil Law stipulates that individual property is the property for the use of individual citizen, and it is derived from socialist distribution according to work done, additional benefits granted by the State and society, products of the inhabitants' supplementary husbandry including those of small plots, property bought or inherited by or presented to him/her and other property lawfully acquired.

It also provides that citizens are entitled to own a house, household and cultural goods needed by his/her family and other necessaries of life, cars and other items.

251. All women enjoy, on the basis of equality with men, the rights to ownership, which constitutes the very basis of all civil rights. Women are accorded rights to conclude, in their own names, contracts for purchase or sale, bank deposit, life or property insurance, trust or loan in accordance with the Civil Law.

252. Women are entitled on the same criteria as men to be elected judge or people's assessor and can qualify as lawyer.

253. In accordance with the Socialist Constitution, the Law on the Composition of Tribunals and the Regulations on the Election of People's Assessors, judges and people's assessors of the courts at all levels are elected at the people's assemblies concerned. Any citizen of the DPRK, male or female, can become a judge, provided he/she is a State-certified law expert and has good reputation for his/her faithful service for the country and people. Any worker, farmer or intellectual may be elected people's assessors without any discrimination based on gender, provided he/she, though not a law expert, has basic knowledge of law and enjoys confidence of people. A people's assessor has the same authority as a judge in a trial. In accordance with the Law on Lawyers, any person can become a lawyer if he/she is a certified expert in the law, has worked in the field of law for more than five years or has qualifications in other fields and passed a lawyers' examination after receiving training in law.

254. Women account for 11.9 per cent of judges at courts at all levels plus lawyers.

255. In accordance with the Criminal Procedures Law, Civil Procedures Law and the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women, women's rights and interests are fully protected and their dignity respected in civil or criminal procedures. In accordance with the Criminal Procedure Law execution of penalty for pregnant women is suspended for three months before delivery and seven months after delivery. In accordance with the Civil Procedures Law, a divorce case is dismissed if it is raised against a pregnant woman or a woman with a child under one year of age. The court, when hearing a divorce case, is obliged to settle matters relating to child maintenance and division of family property. Hearing of claims concerning child maintenance and cases raised by a woman with a child under one year of age or several children are administered by the court that has jurisdiction over the place of residence of the plaintiff. Claimants for child maintenance and subsistence allowance do not have to pay State charges.

Article 16
Equality in marriage and family

256. The Family Law provides that citizens shall have the rights to marry freely (art. 8). The Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women provides that women have the rights to free marriage (art. 45).

257. In accordance with article 11 of the Family Law, legal recognition and protection by the State of marriage is conditional on the registration thereof with a registry office.

258. A marriage under the minimum age for marriage, a marriage with a person who already has a registered husband or wife and a consanguineous marriage are not allowed and declared null and void. The declaration is made by the court.

259. The Socialist Constitution provides that marriage and family shall be protected by the State (art. 78). The Family Law stipulates that the relationship between husband and wife is established through marriage (art. 16), the husband and wife shall have equal rights within the family (art. 18), both the husband and the wife shall keep full name given to them and may choose their occupations according to their wishes and abilities and participate in public activities (art. 17), the husband and the wife shall ensure that their family is harmonious and cheerful (art. 15) and are duty-bound to support his/her spouse should he/she have lost ability to work.

260. The Family Law provides that divorce may be granted if a marriage cannot be continued because one party has been guilty of gross infidelity to conjugal love and trust, or for some other reasons (art. 21). The legal relationship between the husband and wife loses effect when divorce is granted. The Civil Procedures Law stipulates that when a divorce case is on trial, the court shall also settle the matters relating to support by one party of the other party if circumstances so require (art. 118).

261. The Family Law stipulates that education of a child is an important duty of the parents (art. 27) and parents shall feed and care for their children and act as proxy for them while they are minors (art. 28).

262. Rearing children is the legal responsibility to be shared and fulfilled by both parents. The Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women provides that women have equal rights and obligations with their husbands to care for their children, and in case the husband dies, loses legal capacity or is unable to look after the child for some reasons, the wife shall be obliged to care for the child (art. 49).

263. Failure by parents to fulfil their obligations to bring up their children is intolerable as it is regarded as a neglect of duties of citizens before the State. In case parents are so irresponsible as not to fulfil their obligations of child upbringing or undertake such obligations unlawfully, they are deprived of their parental authority or in serious cases subject to criminal punishment.

264. In accordance with the stipulations in article 22 of the Family Law, in cases of divorce the custody of children is decided, by agreement between the two parties in the interests of children and in case of failure in mutual agreement the court intervenes to settle the issue, taking into consideration the degree of concern by either party for the children, the children's attachment to either of them and their economic positions.

265. The Civil Procedures Law provides that when a divorce case is on trial, the court shall also settle matters relating to the upbringing of children, the supporting of the other party and disposing of property.

266. In the whole procedures of receiving, investigating and hearing divorce cases the court finds out about which of the husband and wife should take custody of children and which is in the best interest of the children concerned, and gives ruling by taking into full account the views of both parties. The principle adhered to in this regard is to place a child under three years of age in the custody of the mother. The party that has no custody of children is under obligation to pay the expenses for the

upbringing of the children within the range of 10-30 per cent of his/her monthly income until they reach working age.

267. The Family Law provides for the purpose of establishing adoption system, required conditions, legal effect and dissolution of adoption, placing the upbringing and education of the adoptive child at the centre of all considerations. This is the manifestation of the popular nature of the laws of the DPRK focusing on putting the interests of children before anything else and creating family and social environment favourable for their growth and development.

268. The Family Law stipulates that citizens may adopt children of other people (art. 30), a citizen who wishes to adopt a child shall obtain consent from the child's parents or guardian and if the child is over six years of age, his/her consent shall also be obtained.

269. Adoption is realized when the application by the would-be adoptive parents has been approved by the population administration institution and registered with the registry office. Only minors under the age of seventeen can be placed for adoption.

270. Children born out of wedlock have the same rights as those born in wedlock. In this regard, the Family Law provides that the relations between parents and children are blood relations.

271. The Family Law provides for the property relations between husband and wife such as rights to possess property, support each other and inherit property. The Civil Law stipulates that the husband and wife have equal rights to possess, use and dispose of family property with the exception of their private property.

272. It is stipulated in the Family Law and the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women that in case a member of the family leaves the family by reason of divorce or for some other reasons, he/she has the right to his/her private property and in case of failure in agreement, the court shall settle the matter. Private property includes the property brought into the family by the person concerned, the property that they owned before the marriage, property inherited or donated or other property of private nature. In settling disputes over property arising at the time of a member's leaving the family, the court settles the matter in such a way that he/she does not have too much of the property, and in case of dispute over property at the time of divorce, the court settles the matter in the interest of the wife and children taking into consideration the nature and use of the property, as well as the economic conditions and income of both parties.